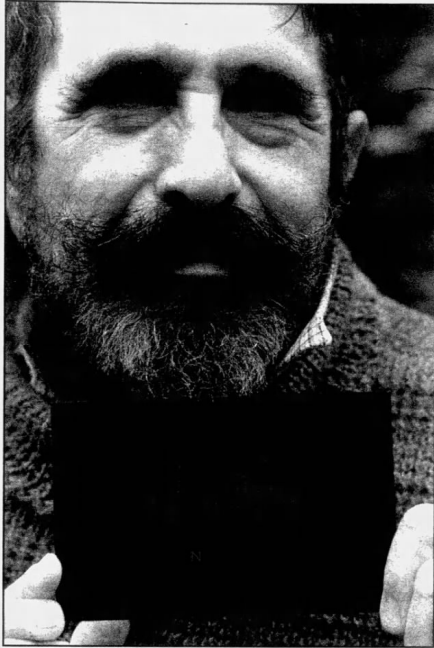


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FEATURES

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BLAZING VESSEL:
Mr Roy Thompson-Holland of Woodmansey with a plate showing the freighter Forresbank on fire off South Africa's "Wild Coast".

Passenger recalls freighter sinking

By Patrick O'Flynn
NEWS REPORTER

THE TRAGIC sinking of the cruiser Oceanos off South Africa's "Wild Coast" last week brought back memories for Roy Thompson-Holland.

Mr Thompson-Holland, a former pupil of Hull Grammar School, still vividly recalls a similar incident in 1958.

As a passenger on board the City of York liner Mr Thompson-Holland watched the freighter Forresbank burn off the Wild Coast after an explosion in its engine room.

Mr Thompson-Holland, a retired chartered engineer now living in Woodmansey, recalls: "Boats from the Forresbank were seen scattered around the ocean and their crews were taken on board the City of York, which also sent a motor launch across to rescue some of the crew who were trapped on the stern

after re-boarding the stricken vessel.

"This was a tricky operation since Forresbank was in ballast, riding high out of the water, rolling and pitching, while several large sharks circling below made it most unwise to attempt jumping into the water."

One man died in the explosion, but 54 crew members survived. Mr Thompson-Holland's illustration of the fire was printed in several South African and Rhodesian newspapers of the time.

Mr Thompson-Holland said the incredibly strong currents off the Wild Coast swept the stricken Forresbank from 17 miles offshore on to rocks 20 miles south of Port St Johns.

Welcome to FLASHBACK, a weekly column which takes a nostalgic look at the memorabilia of Hull and the surrounding areas, its events and its people

FLASHBACK

Passenger Recalls Freighter Sinking

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